# **Chapter 05 - Assignments**

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# **Part 1 - Service Agreements**

# 05101 THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) AND NOAA

A. Members of the NOAA Corps may serve throughout DOC and NOAA.

# 05102 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)

- A. NOAA Corps officers may serve with DOD during peacetime or during a national emergency. NOAA Corps officers performing duties in support of DOD programs, whether in training, temporarily assigned, transferred, or assigned to and serving with that agency, shall perform such duty under provisions of the Joint Regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Defense. (NCD Chapter 14, Appendix I.)
- B. NOAA Corps officers assigned to DOD shall be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

# 05103 U.S. COAST GUARD (USCG)

A. NOAA and the USCG are authorized to cooperate in activities such as those contributing to resource conservation and the safety of life and property on and over the high seas and waters over which the United States has jurisdiction. [14 U.S.C. 147; 16 U.S.C. 1861] NOAA Corps officers, regardless of type of assignment, shall provide such cooperation and assistance to the USCG as shall be deemed necessary to fulfill the obligation of NOAA in these matters.

# 05104 DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)

- A. NOAA Corps officers assigned to NOAA components may be assigned to or work with the DOS periodically on multinational projects, sending of teams to foreign countries, perform preliminary contact procedures with certain countries, provide liaison with international organizations, and other reasons as required.
- B. NOAA Corps officers may also be assigned for service in international development programs. [22 U.S.C. 2396(a)(16)]

# **Part 1 - Service Agreements**

# 05105 OTHER AGENCIES

- A. Most of NOAA's technical projects for the benefit of agencies other than DOD are performed on a cost-reimbursable basis. If assigned, a NOAA Corps officer will, in addition to these directives, be subject to the regulations of such agency. The NOAA Corps officer's duties shall be as agreed upon between the Director and the head of the host agency.
- B. While on duty with another agency, the NOAA Corps officer will not lose any right, status, or credit for promotion or retirement.

#### 05106 OTHER NATIONS

A. NOAA Corps officer assignments to projects performed with or for other countries are negotiated through the DOS and particulars will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

# PART 2 – Billets

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#### Part 2 – Billets

#### **05201 AUTHORITY**

A. The Director has final authority to approve billets and assign NOAA Corps officers.

# **05202 DEFINITIONS**

- A. Billet a job to which an NOAA Corps officer is assigned.
- B. NOAA Corps Officer Billet Description a statement of duties, responsibilities, career development opportunities and educational requirements associated with a specific billet (NOAA Form 56-28A).
- C. Billet List An inventory of approved billets representing the use of NOAA Corps officers for carrying out NOAA missions.
- D. Billet Category A letter designation describing billet priority.
  - (1) "A" Billets the Director has committed to fill on a continuous basis. Overlap is required between the incumbent and relieving officer.
  - (2) "B" Billets that may occasionally become vacant. NOAA Corps officers in these billets may be reassigned to higher priority billets depending on NOAA Corps or program requirements. Overlap will take place whenever possible.
  - (3) "C" Billets designed to fulfill a one-time need.
  - (4) "T" Training billets, including but not limited to, aviation, full-time university, and basic officer training.
  - (5) "R" Billets funded by the program office to which the officer is assigned.

#### Part 2 – Billets

#### 05203 BILLET PRIORITIES

- A. In determining the priority of billets, the Director shall take into account the following factors:
  - (1) contribution of the billet to the fulfillment of NOAA programs and missions;
  - (2) NOAA Corps officer professional progression or development; and
  - (3) requirements for special skills or knowledge.

#### 05204 CHANGES TO THE BILLET LIST

- A. Senior NOAA Officials may request changes to the billet list in response to changing program needs or to better utilize officer talent. Requests must include a justification and be submitted by memorandum to the Director. The program's NOAA Corps Liaison Officer (see NCD 05303) should be kept informed by the program of all billet description changes. A completed NOAA Form 56-28A for the new or changed billet must be attached to the memorandum. The Director will approve changes to the billet list that are in the best interest of NOAA.
- B. Changes to the billet list will generally be one of two types:
  - (1) Redefinition The realignment of a billet within a Program Office.
  - (2) Reallocation The addition of a new billet and the deletion of an existing billet from a Program Office.

# 05205 ANNUAL REVIEW OF BILLET LIST

A. The Director will conduct an Annual Review of the NOAA Corps Billet List. This review will be conducted in October each year. Prior to this, CPC will contact each Line and Staff office for billet changes.

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#### 05301 ASSIGNMENT POLICY

A. The assignment of NOAA Corps officers is approved by the Director. The Director, will appoint an Officer Assignment Board (OAB) to make recommendations concerning assignments. Membership and specific duties of the OAB are discussed in NCD Chapter 10.

#### 05302 ASSIGNMENT COORDINATOR

A. The Assignment Coordinator is a NOAA Corps officer and a Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) staff member who is responsible for coordinating and managing the assignment process. The Assignment Coordinator advises the Director; the Director, CPC; the Chief, Career Development Division; the OAB; NOAA Corps Liaison Officers; program managers; and individual NOAA Corps officers in all matters relating to the assignment of NOAA Corps officers.

#### 05303 NOAA CORPS LIAISON OFFICERS

- A. NOAA Corps Liaison Officers are normally the senior NOAA Corps officers within NOAA Line offices designated by the program, and approved by the Director, to perform the following liaison duties:
  - (1) serve as the representative for their respective Line Offices in billet management and NOAA Corps officer assignment matters;
  - (2) actively represent the interests of their respective Line Office in these matters;
  - (3) actively solicit input from program managers and individual NOAA Corps officers regarding assignment proposals, and advise the Assignment Coordinator; and.
  - (4) maintain contact with all NOAA Corps officers assigned to their Line Offices.

5/6/2004

B. NOAA Corps Liaison Officers are encouraged to follow the performance of all NOAA Corps officers assigned to their respective Line Offices.

# 05304 ASSIGNMENT CRITERIA

- A. The following criteria will be used to effect assignments:
  - (1) needs of NOAA programs, as represented by the billet list;
  - (2) information provided by the Assignment Coordinator and/or NOAA Corps Liaison Officer(s);
  - (3) individual NOAA Corps officer's career development;
  - (4) experience and training;
  - (5) performance and promotion potential;
  - (6) balance of sea, shore, flight, and mobile duty;
  - (7) availability of a qualified NOAA Corps officer;
  - (8) grade level of the billet and of the NOAA Corps officer;
  - (9) time in geographical area and in current assignment; and
  - (10) travel costs.

#### 05305 ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

A. A memorandum is generated one year before each NOAA Corps officer's due-out date informing the NOAA Corps officer of the upcoming reassignment.

- B. Whenever possible, NOAA Corps officer will be notified of an assignment change at least six months before the effective date of transfer, though pressing needs of the service may preclude a six-month notification.
- C. Before an OAB meeting, the Assignment Coordinator will ensure that all relevant assignment information is available to the OAB, including the NOAA Corps officers' most recent assignment requests; list of billets to be filled; and official requests for specific NOAA Corps officers and/or assignments. This information shall be included in an agenda provided to NOAA Corps Liaison Officers at least two weeks before a scheduled OAB meeting. The Fitness Reports and Service Reports of NOAA Corps officers under discussion shall be made available only to the OAB. In addition, CPC will make the OAB aware of any administrative actions that have been levied against the NOAA Corps officer under discussion.
- D. Within five working days after deliberations, the OAB Chair shall provide the Director with a list of recommended assignment changes. Assignment recommendations shall include a short statement detailing the board's rationale. The Director's approval of a recommended assignment will be in the form of a memorandum advising the NOAA Corps officer of the forthcoming assignment. In the event an assignment recommendation is not approved, the board shall make such further recommendations as are required.

#### 05306 ASSIGNMENT PREFERENCES

A. NOAA Corps officers must list future assignment preferences in the Service Report (NOAA Form 56-25A). This information is used in the OAB's assignment process. NOAA Corps officers may at any time submit changes or supporting information to the Director, CPC. Service Reports are mandatory and shall be sent with the NOAA Corps officer's end of the year Fitness Report for Commissioned Officers.

# 05307 ASSIGNMENT OF NOAA CORPS OFFICER MARRIED TO A NOAA CORPS OFFICER

#### A. Without Dependents:

(1) Every reasonable effort will be made to assign a NOAA Corps officer legally married to another NOAA Corps officer to the same geographic location, in order for them to maintain a joint residence. However, the NOAA Corps officers concerned must clearly recognize, and accept, that such assignments will always be weighed within the needs of the service.

NOAA Corps officers must be available for duty assignments worldwide, in accordance with the needs of the service, except as a duty assignment may be limited under the provisions of NCD 08603.

- Unless otherwise arranged, separate Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves of collocating NOAA Corps officers will be executed at the same time, within the flexibility permitted by the authorizing orders. Each NOAA Corps officer will execute orders in his or her own right, preserving all entitlements applicable to each.
- (3) A NOAA Corps officer married to another NOAA Corps officer will not be permanently assigned together to the same NOAA ship. A NOAA Corps officer married to another NOAA Corps officer will not be assigned to the same organization where one will be within two levels of the other in the same supervisory management chain.

# B. With Dependents:

- (1) The NOAA Corps has the right to expect that a NOAA Corps officer's full performance of duty will not be affected by the fact of dependency status (see NCD 01505). NOAA Corps officers must be available for assignments worldwide, in accordance with the needs of the service, except assignments that may be limited under the provisions of NCD 08603. Except as otherwise provided in these directives, sea and mobile duty assignment duration (NCD 05402) are not limited due to the needs associated with the care of dependents. In the case of a NOAA Corps officer married to another NOAA Corps officer, reassignment to sea or mobile duty is expected of each such NOAA Corps officer, as the needs of the service require. Normally the timing of these assignments will be managed so that one of the NOAA Corps officers may provide care for the dependents.
- (2) The nature of a uniformed service is such that a NOAA Corps officer must make and maintain suitable arrangements for the care of dependents at all times and under all reasonably predictable or foreseeable circumstances. The Director, CPC, shall counsel NOAA Corps officers not fully available for duty due to inadequate dependent care arrangements. NOAA Corps officer assignment rotation dates are normally recommended, approved, and communicated to NOAA Corps officers well in advance of the expected reporting date. NOAA Corps officers are expected to report to each assignment in accordance with the authorizing orders. In unusual circumstances, hardships may be encountered. The Director may delay the reporting date and grant a reasonable amount of time to resolve the difficulties with dependent care. If, subsequently, there is no equitable means for resolving the situation, the Director will take the administrative action deemed to be the most appropriate and consistent with the needs of the service.

C. NOAA Corps officers who are married to an active duty officer of another service will be collocated whenever possible, presuming successful coordination with the other service.

#### 05308 ASSIGNMENT OF SINGLE NOAA CORPS OFFICERS WITH DEPENDENTS

- A. The NOAA Corps has a right to expect that a NOAA Corps officer's full performance of duty will not be affected by the fact of dependency status (see NCD 1505). NOAA Corps officers must be available for duty assignments worldwide, in accordance with the needs of the service, except as duty assignment may be limited under the provisions of NCD 08603.
- B. There is no preferential assignment policy that applies to a single officer with dependents. Such NOAA Corps officers are assigned under the same process and procedures as all other NOAA Corps officer. NOAA Corps officer assignment rotation dates are normally recommended, approved, and communicated to officers well in advance of the expected reporting date. NOAA Corp officers are expected to report to each assignment in accordance with the authorizing orders.
- C. The nature of a uniformed service is such that NOAA Corps officers must make and maintain suitable arrangements for the care of dependents at all times and under all reasonably predictable or foreseeable circumstances. NOAA Corps officers not fully available for duty due to inadequate dependent care arrangements shall be counseled by the Director, CPC. Should circumstances reveal that the assignment would involve hardship not normally encountered by other NOAA Corps officers, the Director, CPC, will consult with the NOAA Corps officer. If there is no equitable means of resolving the situation, the Director will take the administrative action deemed most appropriate and consistent with the needs of the service.

# 05309 ASSIGNMENT OF PREGNANT NOAA CORPS OFFICERS

- A. It is the policy of the NOAA Corps not to require pregnant officers to perform duties that potentially could jeopardize the health of the NOAA Corps officer and the unborn child. Pregnancy status does not confer upon the NOAA Corps officer any preferential assignment considerations beyond those dictated by medical prudence. In order to afford the NOAA Corps officer who gives birth a reasonable opportunity to make suitable child care arrangements (see NCD 05307) the following assignment policies will apply:
- B. Pregnant NOAA Corps officers assigned to shore duty who are otherwise eligible for flight, sea or mobile duty assignments (see NCD 05402) can be deferred from such duty during pregnancy as prescribed by a medical officer. This period of deferral may continue for up to six months following delivery consistent with medical documentation provided by the NOAA Corps officer. The NOAA Corps officer can request an earlier rotation to flight, sea or mobile duty provided such request is approved by a medical officer and that medical documentation is provided.
- C. NOAA Corps officers who become pregnant while assigned to flight, sea or mobile duty may be temporarily reassigned ashore to duties consistent with medical documentation provided by the NOAA Corps officer.
- D. These reassignments will be coordinated by the OAB and/or the Director, CPC. If circumstances permit, the temporarily reassigned NOAA Corps officer will be eligible to return to flight, sea or mobile duty when medically qualified.

#### 05310 ASSIGNMENT OF NOAA CORPS OFFICERS ADOPTING CHILDREN

- A. The NOAA Corps recognizes the possibility that its officers may wish to adopt children, thus a NOAA Corps officer contemplating adoption is required to notify the Director, CPC, of this intent. The adoption process can be unpredictable in terms of when an officer seeking adoption can expect to receive a child. The NOAA Corps is committed to providing sufficient flexibility in its aviation, sea or mobile duty assignment policies to facilitate the practical needs of the adoption situation.
- B. If a NOAA Corps officer is ashore and otherwise eligible for aviation, sea or mobile duty assignment (see NCD 05402), a single NOAA Corps officer who receives official notification of adoption of a child by a date certain, will be deferred from such duty for a period not less than six months from the date the child is received, unless the NOAA Corps officer request an earlier rotation.
- C. A single NOAA Corps officer, serving in a aviation, sea or mobile duty assignment, who receives official notification of the adoption of a child by a date certain, will be temporarily reassigned to suitable duties in sufficient time to accomplish the adoption, given reasonable notice. This reassignment will be coordinated by the OAB and/or the Director, CPC. The temporarily reassigned officer will be eligible to return to duty to complete the assignment not earlier than six months following the date the child is received, unless the NOAA Corps officer requests an earlier return.
- D. In the case of a NOAA Corps officer married to another NOAA Corps officer, the NOAA Corps officer of the couple who is not serving in a aviation, sea or mobile duty assignment will be presumed to be the initial custodial parent. No temporary reassignment of the other NOAA Corps officer is contemplated. If both NOAA Corps officers are serving in a aviation, sea or mobile duty assignment, the couple shall elect in advance which NOAA Corps officer is to be temporarily reassigned to assume custodial parent duties. Once a child is adopted, the provisions of NCD 05307B of these directives apply.
- E. The above provisions do not apply to NOAA Corps officer married to a non-officer who chooses to adopt. In this case, it is presumed that the non-officer will assume custodial parent duties.

# **PART 4 - Tours of Duty**

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#### Part 4 - Tour of Duty

#### 05401 GUIDELINES

A. Assignments are designed for fairness and balance while satisfying NOAA's mission. Each NOAA Corps officer should accrue a fair share of sea and mobile duty to prevent disproportionate burdens. NOAA Corps officers should not have to experience an excessive amount of duty in one category. Aviators are not precluded from serving at sea.

#### 05402 ASSIGNMENT DURATION

- A. Assignment duration is subject to NOAA program requirements, the nature and mission of the assignment, and availability of relief personnel. Shore assignments tend to become longer as NOAA Corps officers acquire seniority. Emergency assignments are exempt from time limitations and are based on the needs of the service.
  - (1) Sea Duty The first assignment will be aboard a NOAA ship for approximately 20 to 30 months. Subsequent tours are normally 24 months, although sea tours may be extended or shortened based on the needs of the service. NOAA Corps officers who "fleet up" to Operations Officer or Executive Officer can expect to hold the new positions for a minimum of 12 and 18 months, respectively. NOAA Corps officers who "fleet up" to Commanding Officer can expect to hold the new position for a minimum of 18 months.
  - (2) Mobile Duty NOAA Corps officers are in a TDY travel status for the majority of the tour. Assignments are generally for a period of 24 months with hydrographic field parties, geodetic field parties, photogrammetric parties, tides parties, airport surveys, recruiting duty, operational flight billets, or remote duty. TDY not to exceed 174 days without secretarial approval.
  - (3) Shore Duty Duty ashore for 24 to 36 months normally follows sea or mobile duty assignments. Shore duty depends upon length of service and may include assignments to headquarters, marine centers, laboratories, full-time training, or duty requiring brief travel away from the duty station.
  - (4) Flight Duty Following flight training, assignments to operational flight billets are generally for periods of 30 to 60 months.
  - (5) Permanent Change of Station Assignments in Alaska, Hawaii, or other locations outside the Continental United States are normally 30 months or more.

# Part 4 - Tour of Duty

#### 05403 PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION PROCESSING

- A. To the extent possible, permanent change of station moves will be equalized among contemporaries.
- B. The Director is the only person authorized to effect a PCS, and does so by issuing a Travel and/or Organization Change Order (NOAA Form 56-1). When required, the Director can delegate this authority to the Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Center or Director, CPC. Each PCS order shall include all information requested on NOAA Form 56-1. This information is required to establish pay entitlements, settle travel accounts, and maintain official files. NOAA Corps officers must send copies of endorsed orders to CPC immediately upon departing from the old duty station and upon reporting to the new duty station.

# 05404 PERMANENT CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT PROCESSING

- A. A change of assignment within a single locality is considered a Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA) and will be approved by the Director. PCA orders will be issued by the Director, CPC.
- B. PCA orders contain the same information as PCS orders, and shall be handled as indicated in NCD 05403B.

# **PART 5 - Aviation Assignments**

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# **PART 5 - Aviation Assignments**

#### 05501 POLICY

- A. The mission of NOAA aviation is to support NOAA's objectives through flight and flight-related activities in accordance with the policy and guidelines contained herein. Officers are assigned to aircraft and assigned on a full-time basis for the following broad functions:
  - (1) data acquisition;
  - (2) research and development;
  - (3) logistical and administrative support; and
  - (4) flight training.
- B. NOAA Corps aviators in non-flying positions may be specifically designated to fly agency aircraft in order to retain current knowledge and experience in the aviation environment. These aviators will serve as emergency relief pilots.
- C. A NOAA Corps Aviation Advisory Board (AAB) is appointed by the Director. Membership and specific duties of the AAB are discussed in NCD10002.
- D. Information on Aviation Career Incentive Pay and Monthly Incentive Pay is contained in NCD Chapter 2.

#### 05502 APPLICATION AND SELECTION

- A. Operational flight assignments are likely for nine of the first twelve years of aviation service. These flight assignments may require in excess of 180 days per year away from home base.
- B. The AAB will review candidates for aviation entry into flight training. Consideration will be limited to NOAA Corps officers who have requested aviation duty.
- C. Candidates for flight training must meet U.S. Coast Guard Service Group I physical standards (COMDTINST M6000.IB Chapter 3-G-7).
- D. AAB shall forward candidate recommendations for flight training to the Director for final selection.

# **PART 5 - Aviation Assignments**

# 05503 TRAINING AND DESIGNATION

A. NOAA Corps officers will be selected or designated as aviators, navigators or air crew members by the Director, after meeting the minimum qualifications as set forth in Aircraft Operations Center (AOC) Aircraft Operations Manual, Chapter 6.

# 05504 NOAA AVIATION DIRECTIVES

A. The AOC Aircraft Operations Manual shall govern personnel training, certification, qualifications, proficiency and aircraft operations for NOAA. NOAA Administrative Order 216-104, Management and Utilization of Aircraft, effective January 31, 2003, addresses NOAA aviation policies, guidelines and procedures.

# PART 6 - Detachment for Cause

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#### **Part 5 – Detachment for Cause**

#### **05601 POLICY**

A. Detachment for cause is the administrative removal of a NOAA Corps officer from a billet due to that NOAA Corps officer's unsatisfactory or marginal performance of duty. Before initiating a request for detachment the, aircraft commander, commanding officer, center commanding officer, or rating supervisor shall ensure that the problem is not reasonably susceptible to correction by training, guidance, reassignment within the activity, or supervisory guidance and counseling.

# 05602 PROCEDURES

- A. A detachment request based on unsatisfactory or marginal performance of duty within an organizational unit must be supported by a comprehensive Fitness Report for Commissioned Officers (NOAA Form 56-6) documenting the NOAA Corps officer's deficiency. A detachment request will also document any counseling given the NOAA Corps officer, or if no counseling was given, the reasons therefore. Ordinarily an aircraft commander, commanding officer, rating supervisor or center commanding officer, should not use the first instance of unsatisfactory or marginal performance as justification for a NOAA Corps officer's detachment for cause. Requests for detachment for cause are not justified when there is a reasonable alternative to resolve the situation. Acceptable reasons for detachment for cause include:
  - (1) unsatisfactory or marginal performance involving one or more significant events where negligence, incompetence, performance failure or disregard is involved; or
  - (2) documented unsatisfactory and/or marginal performance of duty over an extended period of time.
- B. Except as provided herein, requests for the detachment of a NOAA Corps officer for cause will be by memorandum, via the chain of command, to the Director. Detachment for cause under urgent circumstances such as the pending deployment of an aircraft or ship to which the NOAA Corps officer is attached or other exigencies, must be followed immediately by a detailed memorandum as outlined in paragraph C below, and should be preceded notifying the next higher level of authority informing them of the detachment.
- C. A request for detachment for cause shall include:

#### **Part 5 – Detachment for Cause**

- (1) a reason for the request, such as unsatisfactory or marginal performance;
- (2) a reasonably detailed statement of the circumstances of the request, including descriptions of and/or typical instances of inadequate performance, or a detailed description of a single significant event that precipitated the detachment request;
- (3) when the request is made by reason of unsatisfactory or marginal performance, a statement of corrective action taken, including changes of assigned duties within the organizational unit, and results thereof. Copies of memoranda documenting the need for improvement of performance, counseling, or instructions for performance of duties should be included; and
- (1) a comprehensive special Fitness Report for Commissioned Officers (NOAA Form 56-6).

#### 05603 NOAA CORPS OFFICER'S STATEMENT

- A. A memorandum requesting detachment for cause shall be shown to and discussed with the NOAA Corps officer who is the subject of the memorandum. The NOAA Corps officer shall sign a written statement confirming that he/she has seen the memorandum requesting detachment for cause. The NOAA Corps officer's signature shall not be interpreted as their consent to or agreement with the statements made in the detachment memorandum. Once the NOAA Corps officer receives the detachment memorandum, the NOAA Corps officer shall be relieved of all duties. The NOAA Corps officer shall be placed on administrative leave until detachment is effected. The NOAA Corps officer shall be afforded an opportunity to submit a written statement through the chain of command concerning the matter(s) set forth in the memorandum within ten working days of detachment.
- B. When the NOAA Corps officer is under medical care and, in the opinion of the attending physician, fulfillment of the requirements noted in paragraph A above would adversely affect that NOAA Corps officer's condition, the requirements of paragraph A may be waived. The reasons for such a waiver shall be set forth in detail in the memorandum or in an endorsement to the memorandum requesting detachment.

#### 05604 SUMMARY RELIEF

A. Nothing in this chapter derogates the inherent authority of a superior to relieve a NOAA Corps officer in order to ensure the safety of personnel or government property, the accomplishment of an assigned mission, or the maintenance of discipline.